Digital Distractions: Using Technology to Engage Families

Wednesday, May 16, 2018
1:15 pm - 2:30 pm
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Silence your phones.
Put away your devices.
Be present with presence.
A Provocation

• Are adults or is it the children that can’t stop connecting via tech?

• Every child needs a media mentor

• Every parent/family needs a media mentor

• Every educator needs to be a media mentor

• Who mentors the mentors?
A new 21st century role: The media mentor

• Where are your families at the museum and when they leave the museum?
• What about families who never come to the museum?
• What should family engagement look like in 2018 and beyond?
• What is the role of tech and what isn’t the role of tech?
What parents want from a media mentor

1. A role model and tour guide with a roadmap to navigate the digital age
2. A trusted source
3. Resources and recommendations
4. To gain tech skills and digital media literacy
5. Opportunities for parent play time
6. Affirmation and empowering tips for promoting a healthy media diet and positive family media ecology at home
7. A gentle nudge about how their own digital behaviors impact children
Technologies

Educators have long sought engaging and playful ways to prepare children for adult roles. They used objects ranging from alphabet blocks depicting familiar animals, to stereographic images of foreign lands, to fully functioning miniature sewing machines.
Technology Position Paper
In 2009 CCM embarked on an institution-wide initiative to identify and examine important perennial issues that staff and management had faced for over three decades.

The goal was to establish “positions” on these issues in order to have consistent viewpoints and strategies for interpreting CCM’s mission—and to continue to develop new papers as relevant.
Usage of Position Papers

- Annual Planning
- Experience Development
- Daily Practice/Operations
- New employee/board member orientation

- Shared with partners, funders, stakeholders
- Shared nationally (ACM, peer institutions)
Position Paper Topics

- Access & Inclusion
- Arts
- Corporate Engagement
- Diversity
- Play
- Learning
- Role of the Adult
- Science
- Technology
Technology Position Paper Purpose

• To establish a clear position on the use of technology in our museum space

• To address technology (specifically digital technology and interactive media) as it intersects with the direct visitor experience

• The position does not seek to make broad recommendations regarding the use of technology in children’s lives beyond our walls.
Key Technology Position Elements

CCM’s primary visitor experience goal is to give children opportunities to interact with the physical world.

We believe this is a key differentiator of the CCM experience in a world that is becoming increasingly reliant on digital experiences for both children and adults.

We will continue to prioritize this as the essential characteristic of our visitor experience.
CCM focuses on helping children make face-to-face interpersonal connections and engage in social interactions to build relationships in our space.

Technology, if used, should support, not interrupt, this goal.
Key Technology Position Elements

CCM’s educators understand the importance of growing and maintaining their own digital literacy. Staff must remain up-to-date with new research findings related to technology and children.

This will ensure that they are able to think critically when selecting technology and media for young children as the museum moves forward.
Key Technology Position Elements

CCM will consider opportunities for incorporating appropriate technology into its space on a case-by-case basis and through a thoughtful, intentional and collaborative process.

Decision-making shall be guided by an approved set of defined criteria (included in paper).
Criteria to use when considering any particular technology

Technology may be appropriate for use in our visitor experience when it:

1. Supports our play and learning values and goals, and is the best possible way to reach those goals.
2. Is not at odds with any of CCM’s other positions.
3. Provides access to an experience that our audience would likely not encounter elsewhere; and/or provides connections to prior experiences.
4. Creates connections between people rather than interrupting connections or isolating an individual. Creates an opportunity for joint attention and language-rich interactions.
5. Is active, hands-on and empowering: grounded in the fundamentals of what is developmentally appropriate for our 0-10 age group; is a real tool that enables creativity, exploration, learning and play.
Criteria to use when considering any particular technology

6. Enriches, enhances, or supports an experience, but is not the whole of an experience. In other words, if the technology breaks down, there is still an experience available.
7. Helps visitors connect further and more deeply with the place-based experiences of CCM. Examples:
   — Technology that supports reflection, documentation, and conversation about the museum experience.
   — Technology that makes the museum an inclusive experience, such as providing a tool that supports the experience for people with varying abilities and learning styles.
8. Is able to be accessed quickly and easily, and has multiple entry points to make it as accessible as possible.
9. Is durable, long-living, functional, affordable, and practical. The appropriate infrastructure and resources are available to ensure the tech experience will ultimately be successful and sustainable.
10. Respects visitors’ safety, security, and privacy, and is in accordance with all laws governing technology usage. (COPPA, etc.)
Key Research Sources

American Academy of Pediatrics
Campaign for a Commercial Free Childhood
Erikson Institute – Center for Technology in Early Childhood
Fred Rogers Center
NAEYC, National Association for the Education of Young Children
University of Chicago Medicine/Thirty Million Words
Zero to Three
Digital Distraction and Caregiver Engagement
Digital Distraction

Research shows parents are "addicted" to their mobile devices. A 2016 study conducted by Common Sense Media found that:

• 48% of parents feel compelled to immediately respond to texts and other notifications
• 69% of parents reported checking their mobile devices hourly
• 41% of teens feel their parents are digitally distracted and inattentive when they’re together
Observation of Digital Distraction Across Exhibits
Unplug. Connect. Play!

Pritzker Playspace is a

SCREEN-FREE ZONE
Observation of Digital Distraction with Screen-Free Zone Sign on Door
Observation of Digital Distraction with Screen-Free Zone Signs in Room
NEXT STEPS

- Consider exhibit spaces (use of furniture and placement; open versus closed space)
- Trainings for floor staff on modeling behavior, how to intervene when digital distraction is observed
- Use of photo/video to extend experience at home
- Handout given at admissions with mindful media tips, how to engage in play
Using Technology to Engage Students and Families

Projects with the Smithsonian Learning Lab
What is the Smithsonian Learning Lab?

- More than 3 million digital records
- 27,000 registered users
- 18,000 Collections (3,700 published)
- Dynamic user tools
Welcome to the Smithsonian Learning Lab!

Support deep, meaningful learning with an online universe of authentic resources and tools for making them your own.
Early Learning with the Smithsonian Learning Lab

Project goal - to engage families with the Learning Lab so that caregivers and children could use the platform collaboratively, promoting development of language and thinking skills.
Worked with underserved families from Ward 7 in Washington, DC, who participated in Smithsonian-sponsored activities at school and in various museums.

Built collections that corresponded to themes of the events.
Project Findings

- Parents can use Learning Lab at home with their children with minimal training
- Parents and children reported enjoyment of the platform as well as the content
- Parents successfully used the Lab and the educational activity on tablets, laptop computers, cellphone, and smartboard; in other words, there were no technological barriers to use
- Parents reported that they had deeper and more focused conversations than usual with their child using the Lab and activity than was usual (this builds thinking and vocabulary skills)
- Some parents reported that they were surprised about what their child already knew, and felt that they learned something new about their child
- Parent expressed interest in the Smithsonian developing more activities similar to the one used in the research
Communication Collection

This painting shows animals that live all over the United States. Have you ever wondered about the homes or habitats of any of these animals? Would you add any other animals to this painting?
Selection from Birds and Animals of the United States

Description:
Artist Winthrop Turney created this painting as a fantasy gathering of American wildlife visually spanning his nation from coast to coast. The artist hoped that this painting of animals grouped around a lavender-tinted tree would become a large mural to adorn a school. The mural would show urban schoolchildren American animals from a variety of environments. Denizens of the eastern coast and swamps inhabit the foreground: the Florida alligator basks below a flying American pelican and a tern; an anhinga spreads its wings to dry; and an egret stands in the lower right corner. The woodland animals are further back: a gray squirrel perches on a tree branch while the striped skunk, groundhog, black bear, wolverine, American porcupine, and red fox stand on the middle ground. In the background are creatures native to the western plains and mountains: the coyote, turkey vulture, pronghorn antelope, mountain lion, and mountain goat. Like the children for whom he painted, Turney lived in New York. He probably knew the gray squirrels of Central Park better than the other animals in the picture, which he saw only in pictures and New York-area zoos.1934: A New Deal for Artists exhibition label

URL: http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=24326
Type: Image
Source: Smithsonian American Art Museum
Creator: Winthrop Duthie Turney, born New York City 1884-died New York City 1965
Keywords: Landscape\tree, Animal\bear, Fantasy\animal, Animal\skunk, Animal\reptile\alligator, Animal\bird\stork, New Deal\Public Works of Art Project\New York City

Identifier:
Object number: 1974.28.75

Dates:
Date: 1934
Museum Animals

Put the animals you saw in the museum in order from your least favorite to your most favorite.

Drag the first image here to start ordering.
Museum Animals

Put the animals you saw in the museum in order from your least favorite to your most favorite.

You've completed the activity!
Movement Collection

What do you see?
Read From Head to Toe with your child or watch the video of the book together. Ask your child what they notice about the book. Use questions like: What is this book about? What do you see that's the same on each page? What is different?

What do you think?
Watch the animal movement videos that go along with each page of the book. Try out the movements with your child and ask them questions like: Where do they think the animals are? What are the animals doing? What makes them say that?

What do you wonder?
Choose an animal or two with your child that you'd like to know more about. Click on the animal's picture to take you to a Learning Lab collection with more resources for exploration. What kinds of questions do you have about your animal? Are you interested in its habitat? What it eats or how it moves?
penguins
Lesson on Joan Miró

Joan Miro

Maureen Leary

This resources in this collection provide a basic introduction to the life and work of Spanish artist Joan Miró.
Questions? Reflections?

THANKS!
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